

GRASSROOTS

A proven anti-conflict programme for schools

This project is a collaboration between the Youth Endowment Fund (YEF), the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), the Behavioural Insights Team (BIT) and IOE, UCL's Faculty of Education and Society

Contact grassroots@bi.team now to express your interest

Summary

- We invite mainstream state secondary schools in [your region](#) to take part in an exciting new trial of a programme that empowers pupils to build positive social relations in school
- Participating schools will receive:
 - **EITHER the Grassroots programme (for free!) OR £750**
 - Plus £500 if your school participates in a case study e.g. interviews and focus groups
 - Access to the full Grassroots curriculum (which **reduced pupil conflict by up to 60% in the US**) after the trial
 - The opportunity to work with the YEF and EEF to build groundbreaking evidence on what works to reduce bullying and conflict in schools.
 - 50% chance of receiving free, fortnightly visits from a trained facilitator, who would support a group of pupils to spread positive social behaviour in your school

What?

We are conducting the first ever UK trial of the Grassroots programme. The programme aims to reduce bullying and conflict in schools by empowering a group of approximately 30 pupils to positively impact their peers. All Year 7-10 pupils complete a survey which is used to identify a group of around 30 Year 7-9 students who, between them, are able to represent the whole student body. These pupils form the 'seed group' and attend 10 fortnightly sessions to create bespoke activities to reduce conflict at school. A small number of Year 10s are also selected to act as occasional 'special advisers'.

During these sessions, Grassroots facilitators will support pupils to:

- Identify areas for improvement in student interactions
- Generate possible solutions (e.g. activities they might do)
- Provide opportunities for action
- Make initiatives visible to others

A large US study found that this intervention (which has now been adapted to suit UK schools) reduced student conflict by up to 60%. Pupils felt empowered by these sessions and initiated activities like challenging themselves to model prosocial behaviours, sharing positive messages using posters and social media, and sharing wristbands with students who had taken a stance against bullying.

How?

We are testing the impact of Grassroots using a randomised controlled trial (RCT). This means that the schools taking part in the trial will be randomly allocated to either be in the **intervention** or the

control group. Schools in the **intervention group** will receive the programme in the 2023-2024 school year.

Schools in the **control group** will receive £750 to participate in the evaluation activities but will otherwise continue with their usual practices next year and not implement Grassroots. They will receive access to the curriculum at the end of the trial.

When?

The trial will begin in **September 2023** but the number of school places is limited so sign up today!

What are the benefits to my school?

By participating in this study your school will receive:

- **EITHER the GRASSROOTS programme (for free!) OR £750**
- **An additional £500** if your school participates in a case study e.g. interviews and focus groups
- The opportunity for your school to **work with the YEF and EEF to build groundbreaking evidence** on what works to reduce bullying and conflict in schools.
- Access to the Grassroots curriculum (which reduced pupil conflict by up to 60% in the US)
- 50% chance of receiving free, fortnightly visits from a trained facilitator, who would support a group of pupils to spread positive social behaviour in your school.

What will it cost my school?

Participation is **free**. All costs will be covered by the YEF and EEF.

How much time will be required?

Implementing the programme requires minimal time and resources from schools.

Schools will need to:

- Share an information sheet and withdrawal form with all parents of participating year groups
- Upload pupil data to the evaluators
- Enable pupils to complete an online survey in the '23 Autumn term and '24 Summer term
- Intervention schools only: collect consent forms from 'seed group' pupils' parents & help organise a room for the 10 fortnightly sessions (facilitated by a DBS-checked Grassroots research assistant)

How will the programme be evaluated?

Surveys and school data on pupil conflict and behaviour will be used to measure the impact of the intervention.

The evaluators (IOE) will also explore whether the intervention improves pupil attendance. To do this, they will use routinely gathered attendance data.

To understand the implementation of the intervention, the evaluators will survey seed pupils and teachers and, in a small number of schools, conduct teacher interviews and pupil focus groups.

How will data sharing work?

Participating schools will be required to provide pupil data (including pupil name, date of birth, unique pupil number (or postcode for schools in Wales), tutor group, year group, free school meal eligibility, sex, ethnicity and disciplinary reports) in order to facilitate the evaluation and enable linkage to the National Pupil Database (or Welsh equivalent).

All personal data collected as part of the study will be treated with the strictest confidence by the project team and processed only in accordance with the requirements of the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. BIT has run research studies in more than 400 schools nationwide since the introduction of GDPR in May 2018, including 16 EEF-funded trials.

Further details about the precise roles of each member of the project team in relation to the processing of personal data will be included in a Memorandum of Understanding and information sheet for parents which we will share in due course.

Project team

This is a major study and several different organisations are collaborating on it. They are:

- **Behavioural Insights Team (BIT)** - *The main organisation your school will have contact with during this study* - BIT is a social purpose company that creates and applies behavioural insights to drive positive change and help people, communities and organisations thrive. BIT is owned by the innovation charity Nesta.
- **IOE, UCL's Faculty of Education and Society** - *The independent evaluators* - They have expertise in conducting school-based research and research into bullying and victimisation.
- **Youth Endowment Fund (YEF)** - *Funders* - A charity dedicated to preventing children and young people becoming involved in violence. They do this by running projects to find out what works and helping people to put what works into practice.
- **Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)** - *Funders* - An independent charity dedicated to breaking the link between family income and educational achievement. They run projects which test the efficacy of education interventions to generate new evidence of what works.

Key dates/timeline

Month	Activity
Feb 2023 - June 2023	Schools sign up to the project (first come, first served!)
Autumn term 2023	Schools send the information sheet to parents, submit pupil data and complete surveys
January 2024 - July 2024	Grassroots facilitators run fortnightly sessions with the seed pupils. Seed pupils carry out their planned activities within their schools.
Summer 2024	Schools complete surveys and upload pupil data
Summer 2025	Results of project published

Next steps

We have limited spots for this project. If you are interested in participating or finding out more, **please email: grassroots@bi.team or scan the QR code.** We look forward to hearing from you soon!

